



# Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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Contact: Cliff Weed (360) 902-2036  
Mike Louisell (360) 902-1813

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

P.O. Box 42560, Olympia, Washington 98504-2560

## **WSDA advisory committee to continue addressing issue**

### **Ban on using clopyralid on lawns to continue**

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Department of Agriculture today (May 28) announced it will continue the current ban on using herbicides containing clopyralid on residential and commercial lawns and turf. In addition, effective June 28, clopyralid products may only be purchased for use on cereal grains and grass used for hay by licensed pesticide applicators.

Clopyralid residues have been found in lawn clippings recycled at compost facilities, causing damage to certain broadleaf ornamentals and vegetables grown in or around such compost. The ban on lawn and turf uses of clopyralid, initially put in place on March 1, is designed to limit grass clippings with clopyralid residues from entering compost facilities that provide product to the public.

The department is continuing the one exemption to the ban on lawn use. Clopyralid products will still be able to be used on golf courses if no grass clippings, leaves or other vegetation are removed from the site and sent to composting facilities that provide product to the public.

“We are committed to resolving this problem using both rules and non-regulatory approaches,” said Bob Arrington, assistant director of WSDA’s Pesticide Management Division. “We support cooperative efforts that help the compost industry produce products that are free of clopyralid residues at levels damaging to sensitive plants.”

In determining the restrictions, department officials took into consideration the comments of several hundred individuals, interest groups and members of an advisory committee formed to make recommendations to mitigate the impact of the persistent herbicide.

WSDA officials did not adopt a proposal that would allow an exemption for applying clopyralid to lawns at non-residential sites such as schools, parks, businesses and cemeteries. There were few comments in support of the expanded use of clopyralid for these types of uses and the option was strongly opposed in testimony provided at a hearing in April.

“People raised concerns that additional exemptions would be difficult to enforce and also would clash with goals for keeping grass clippings out of landfills,” Arrington said.

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Officials intend to monitor compost at public facilities for traces of clopyralid to gauge the effectiveness of the new restrictions. The possibility of considering rules that would add restrictions on use on other crops is being considered. Meanwhile, wheat growers and others are working on outreach and educational programs seeking to keep wheat straw treated with clopyralid from reaching compost production. A market may be developed that provides clopyralid-free straw to the compost industry.

Clopyralid has been effective in bringing Canada thistle under control for wheat growers and timothy hay producers and others using it to control noxious invasive weeds such as the knapweed and yellow starthistle. It also is a critical tool for forestry and for fighting noxious weeds for environmental preservation and restoration of habitat areas.

Pesticide dealers and applicators licensed by WSDA are being notified of the restrictions.

For more information about this issue and a copy of the new rule, visit the department's Web site at [www.wa.gov/agr](http://www.wa.gov/agr) and click on Clopyralid.

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